

Lincoln St. Neighbors Organize Against Heavy Truck Traffic

By PAULA MAXWELL

A problem which has plagued the Lincoln St. neighborhood for many years has reared its ugly head with a vengeance this year as area residents are saying they've had enough and are demanding the town and state do something to stop heavy truck traffic on their street.

Last week residents who have organized under the name Crooked Lane Neighbors Assn, a reference to the area's former name, came before the town's Highway Safety Committee, who assured the residents they would support the effort to curb the steady stream of 18-wheel truck traffic on the heavily trafficked road.

DPW Director Walter Tonaszuck is also in support of the neighbors' petition to limit truck traffic saying the road has been destroyed in less than 7 years. The fairly

recent road reconstruction should have lasted for 20 years, he said.

Tonaszuck will support spending funds to do a traffic study as part of the town's presentation to the state. Part of the state's criteria for limiting traffic involves traffic counts, alternate route designation, and damage to the road.

Heavy truck traffic along the 3-mile, 3-street corridor from Duxbury's Route 14 exit along Lincoln, Franklin and Acorn streets to Route 3A is now heavier than ever as a shortcut to Marshfield's Route 139.

The state DPW has even posted a sign along Route 3 north encouraging vehicles to use the short cut to avoid construction along Route 139 to Marshfield.

Two weeks ago, area residents met in an informal meeting at the Grange Hall on Franklin St. where residents from both Duxbury and Marshfield aired their concerns over speed, noise, destruction of the roadbed and other traffic and safety hazards. Former DES school principal and Lincoln St. resident Larry Hojlo organized the effort.

Tonaszuck said he will ask state highway officials to remove signs on Route 3 north directing motorists to use Exit 11 and Lincoln St. as an alternative route to Marshfield.

He said that because part of the Lincoln-Franklin-Acorn street route is in Marshfield, both Marshfield and Duxbury selectmen should ask state officials for permission to impose weight limits on trucks traversing the roads and designate an alternate route such as Route 3A to absorb the heavy truck traffic. He urged concerned residents in both towns to form a coalition to achieve their goals.

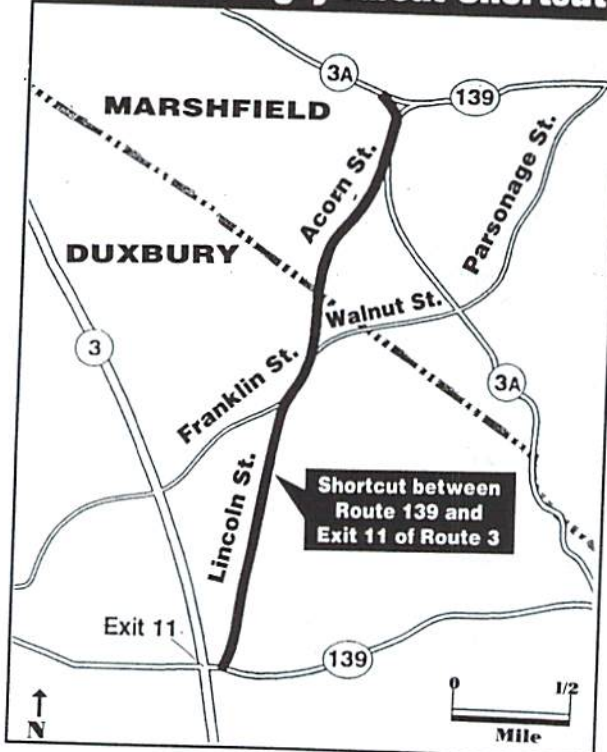
Crooked Lane Assn spokesman Bob Winston of Lincoln St., a former member of the town's Highway Safety Committee and a long-time advocate of curbing heavy truck traffic on Lincoln St., said the situation is "intolerable."

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"The road has not only become a speedway, it is narrow and extremely dangerous. It's virtually impossible to walk a dog or ride a bike along the street," he said. "Mothers can't even push a baby carriage."

Ironically, one of the town's youth soccer fields is tucked in along Lincoln St. Children riding bicycles to

Residents Angry About Shortcut



the field must ride alongside heavy 18-wheel trucks in order to reach their destination, Winston said.

"These trucks are too big, too wide for this residential

Streets

country road. Not only are we talking about a safety hazard here but possible loss of life in an accident. We're talking about noise, air pollution from diesel exhaust and premature road deterioration," he said.

The town should also consider the real estate tax issue, Winston said. "The road should be reclassified for valuation purposes because of the heavy traffic.

"We're paying too much money in taxes considering what we have to put up with," he said.

Tonaszuck, who has heard requests from Lincoln St. neighbors seeking truck limitations before, said last week, "If I wasn't a believer before, I am now."

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This sign, which advises motorists to use Exit 11 as an alternate route to Marshfield, has increased the traffic on Lincoln and Acorn Streets. Many more cars now travel these rural roads. Heavy 18-wheel trucks also use the shortcut which damages the surface and causes an unwanted safety hazard in a residential area.

Photo by Fran Nichols